

REMARKS

A. Request for Reconsideration

Applicant has carefully considered the matters raised by the Examiner in the outstanding Office Action but remains of the position that patentable subject matter is present. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the Examiner's position based on the amendments to the specification, the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

B. The Invention

The present invention is directed to a reusable pipe fitting plug for temporarily sealing an open hub of a plastic pipe fitting. In one of the novel aspects of the invention, the pipe fitting plug includes a retaining means having two blade portions which pierce the inside of the plastic pipe fitting so that the plug is firmly anchored into the pipe fitting.

C. Claim Status and Amendments

Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 9-12, 14, 15 and 20 are presented for further prosecution. Claims 3, 5, 6, 8, 13, and 16-19 are withdrawn from consideration.

Claims 1, 10 and 20 have been amended to more particularly define the retaining means of the present invention. Claims 1, 10 and 20 recite that the retaining means comprises two blade portions, each blade portion having a blade thickness that is substantially smaller

than a blade length so that the blade portions pierce the inside of the pipe fitting hub. Support for these amendments can be found in Figures 1 and 4 of the application as well as in paragraph 2 on page 5 and in par. 3 on page 15 of the application. As detailed therein, retaining ring 5 includes two knife-like bladed portions that anchor into the pipe fitting when the bladed portions are extended. The knife-like bladed portions have a blade thickness that is substantially smaller than the blade length.

Claims 1, 10 and 20 have also been amended to clarify that the pipe fitting plug of the present invention is intended to be used to plug plastic pipes. Since such pipes are plastic, the claimed retaining ring is capable of piercing the inside portions of the pipe fitting in order to anchor the plug in the pipe fitting.

Claims 4 and 12 have been amended as a result of the amendments of claims 1 and 10.

D. Specification Amendments

Pages 13 and 15 of the Application have been amended to correct obvious typographical errors.

E. The Office Action

Claims 1-12, 14, 15, and 20 had been rejected as being anticipated by Dorgebray (U.S. 3,886,977). Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 9-12, 14, 15, and 20 had been rejected as being anticipated by Leslie (U.S. 4,381,800). Claims 1, 2, 4, 7, 9-12, 14, 15, and 20 had been rejected as being anticipated by Saxon (U.S. 4,760,868). Claims 1, 4, 7, 9,

10, 12, 14, 15, and 20 had been rejected as being anticipated by Noe (U.S. 4,474,216).

1. Dorgebray, Leslie, Saxon and Noe do not teach or suggest the retaining means of claims 1, 10 and 20

The Examiner cited retaining means 19 in Fig. 2 of Dorgebray, retaining means 56 in Fig. 2 of Leslie, retaining means 30 in Fig. 2 of Saxon, and retaining means 84 in Fig. 4 of Noe to teach the retaining means of the present invention.

As discussed above, Applicant has amended claims 1, 10, and 20 to more particularly define the retaining means of the present invention. Claims 1, 10, and 20 recite that the retaining means has two blade portions, wherein each blade portion has a blade thickness that is substantially smaller than a blade length.

As shown in Fig. 1 of the Application, retaining ring 5 of the retaining means has a "V"-shape, and each blade of the "V"-shape has a blade thickness that is substantially smaller than a blade length. As a result of the claimed configuration, the retaining means can pierce the inside of a plastic pipe fitting in order to anchor the pipe fitting plug in the pipe fitting. Since the pipe fitting plug of the invention is mainly designed for plastic pipe fittings, the "piercing function" of the bladed retaining means has a particular advantage over conventional pipe plugs.

Dorgebray, Leslie, Saxon, and Noe do not teach or suggest the bladed retaining means of claims 1, 10, and 20. Instead, the retaining means of each of the cited references has a substantially

flat, extended surface that runs adjacent to the interior surface of the pipe. For example, in Figure 2 of Dorgebray, the substantially flat surface of retaining means 19 travels parallel to the inner surface of the pipe. The retaining means of the remaining cited references have a similar structure.

In contrast to the claimed invention, the retaining means of the cited references are not blade-shaped and do not pierce the inside as cited in claims 1, 10, and 20. Moreover, the retaining means of the cited references do not have a thickness that is substantially smaller than the length as recited in claims 1, 10, and 20. Actually, the retaining means of the cited references have a thickness that is substantially larger than the length, which is opposite to the recitation in claims 1, 10, and 20. As a result, the retaining means of the cited references cannot "pierce" the inside of a pipe fitting and cannot anchor the pipe fitting plug into the pipe fitting in the manner achieved by the bladed retaining means of the present invention.

Applicant respectfully submits that the present invention is not anticipated by Dorgebray, Leslie, Saxon, or Noe.

F. Timeliness of Response

The 3-month period for reply to the Office Action expired on September 16, 2005. Since September 16 was a Saturday, the 3-month period is extended until Monday, September 18, 2006. This Response is therefore being filed within the 3-month period.

G. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested. Should any extensions of time or fees be necessary in order to maintain this Application in pending condition, appropriate requests are hereby made and authorization is given to debit Account # 02-2275.

Respectfully submitted,

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